R&D expenditure as a percentage of sales turnover, in the drugs and pharmaceuticals sector for private sector industries during 1996-97, 1997-98, 1998-99 has been 0.63, 0.62 and 0.76 respectively.

(c) and (d) Some new drugs are claimed to have been invented/ developed by companies and industry funded non commercial/ scientific and industrial research organisations. These drugs are under various stages of clinical trials. According to information available, these drugs have not been marketed so far.

Research benefits to farmers

2733. SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the agriculture research and education in the country is not in a position to impart research benefits to farmers, due to lack of financial support;

(b) if so, what was the demand for agriculture research and education during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(c) whether the demand had been met; if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) what steps Government propose to take to provide the required / demanded amount?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) Though there is a paucity of funds, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is imparting research benefits to farmers. The Council have established Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in various parts of the Country, the activities of which are on-farm testing to identify the location specificity of technology in various farming systems, frontline demonstration to establish the production potentiality on farmers' field, skill training of farmers to update their knowledge in modern agricultural technology, and training of extension personnel to orient them in the frontier areas of technology development. During the year 2000-01 a total of 17 thousand training courses covering 4.18 lakhs farmers and rural youths have been

trained by these KVKs including 1.5 thousand training courses covering 35 thousand extension personnel. In order to speed-up process of dissemination of agricultural technology, during the year 2000-01, the KVKs organised various extension activities including kisan melas (246), field days (1215), kisan goshties (1043), films shows (761), exhibition (170), newspaper coverages (2192) and other activities (3061) were undertaken by KVKs. Besides, conducting about 22895 frontline demonstration to establish the production potentials of the newly released production technologies on the farmers plots, a large number of on farm trials were undertaken to identify the location specificity of technology under various farming systems. However, in these days of international competition on science and technology based research, particularly bio-technology, the need is of a much higher order. If this is made available the servicing of the farmers can be tremendously improved.

(b) The Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE) had formulated its need based projections during IX Plan in accordance of 1% of Agricultural Gross Domestic Product as also recommended by IX Plan Working Group and Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture (PSCA), which was at Rs. 7800 crore + Rs. 500 crore as Catch UP Grant meant for renovation and modernization of old infrastructure, equipments and other research facilities of the National Agricultural Research System. In this way a total of Rs. 8300 crore was demanded by DARE/ICAR in the IX Plan.

(c) During Ninth Plan Period, the Planning Commission had allocated an amount of Rs. 3376.95 crore including Rs. 400 crore as Catch UP Grant in respect of DARE/ICAR. However the same has now been curtailed to Rs. 2514.17 crore.

(d) Since the IX Plan allocation has been of a much lower order than the need, the capacity of ICAR for absorbing funds has also become proportionately limited by the end of the IX plan period. Therefore, for the X Plan period the DARE/ICAR's requirement has been projected Rs. 15000 crore + Rs. 1000 crore as Catch up Grant. If an allocation of this order is received, it is expected that the

DARE/ICAR will be able to absorb the projected funds and after this period, will develop the capacity to absorb the entire allocation of 1% of Agricultural GDP. The Department is continuously pursuing the matter with Planning Commission and Ministry of Finance to meet the projected requirement of funds during the balance period of Ninth Plan and the Tenth Plan.

Promoting Bio-Fertilizers

†2734. SHRI DEVI PRASAD SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the programme being run by Government to promote eco-friendly bio-fertilizers;

(b) whether press-mud effluents of sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh are being used in manufacturing bio-fertilizers;

(c) if so, what assistance is being given by Government to sugarcane growers of Uttar Pradesh to increase sugarcane production; and

(d) whether Government are contemplating to run incentive programmes in this direction in other States also?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) The Department of Agriculture is implementing during 9th plan, a continuing Central Sector Scheme entitled National Project on Development & Use of Biofertilisers. Under this scheme non-recurring grant upto Rs. 20 lakhs is being given for setting up biofertiliser production units upto 150 tonnes capacity per year by Agro Industries/cooperatives/public sector undertakings of fertilizers, NGOs and private entrepreneurs. The targeted capacity of 4500 Metric tonnes of biofertiliser production during 9th plan has been sanctioned. In addition, under Balanced & Integrated Use of Fertilisers, the Government was assisting in setting up of compost plants in urban areas. The scheme has been transferred to States

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.